

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

I believe it is highly improbable that a broadcast flag would not interfere with consumers' legitimate ability to make copies of content. There is simply no way that one could imagine all the ways in which a consumer might want to legitimately use a recording of digital media. Aside from the known legitimate uses for PVR's and recording to removable media there are countless other ways in which a person might wish to use their digital content. My greatest concern is, since policy makers can't predict the future, and the restrictions built into hardware are not easily changeable, if at all, that this broadcast flag will lack the flexibility to allow me to use the content that I view and record in any legal manner possible.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices? This practically the same question with the same problems as Question 1. No organization can predict the array of devices that will be available and ways these devices will use digital content in the future. Here is an example that demonstrates my lack of confidence in this "broadcast flag". My roommate and I plan on putting together a set top media box. This media box would be connected to across a network to our household media server which contains copies of music and movies we have bought as well as content we have recorded from TV. Essentially it would just be a souped up PVR with the capability of playing DVD's as well as other content not physically located in the box. To the best of my knowledge no complete solution like this exists on the market, but it would fit our needs very well.

My concern is, when this "broadcast flag" is implemented, will legitimate uses such as this be possible or will some of my rights as a consumer disappear because nobody foresaw this particular kind of usage and no commercial entity is producing the software to do what I want?

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

This question ties directly to my response in question 2. This set top box I mentioned in question 2 has already been manufactured and just needs the right software rolled together and written to be used in the manner we would like. I am concerned that this "broadcast flag" would infringe on our ability to use this box in all legitimate ways.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

I believe a broadcast flag would absolutely limit the development of future equipment. It is impossible to predict how consumers will want to use content they have rights to in the future. Manufactures of devices that may want to use content in a way that this digital flag inadvertently prohibits would be affected.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

Time is money and more hardware costs money. Forcing content providers to implement this "broadcast flag", and all manufacturers that wish to use

this digital content to implement methods to use it will undoubtedly increase costs of both producing content (which is eventually passed on to the consumer be it in the form of increased cable bills or longer commercials) and manufacturing devices that use the content (which is of course passed on to the consumer).